A dry but rather dull month

Description

Mild and dry might not be the first thing you think of looking back at November as we have seen the first significant frosts of the season in England and Wales, but the month for the UK as a whole has had its sixth warmest November (for Mean Temperature) in a series that goes back to 1884.

The east and north-east coast of England has experienced relatively dry conditions over the month having only seen half of its average rainfall for the month. Tyne and Wear has had its driest November in 60 years, receiving only 24% (16.7mm) of its monthly average rainfall. The driest November on record for Tyne and Wear was in 1958 seeing 14.2mm of rainfall. This November is now the second driest November on record for Tyne and Wear, which was also the driest area in the UK.

Tim Legg, a scientist in the National Climate Information Centre, said: “For the UK as a whole it was a rather dry, but also rather dull month. The dryness in eastern counties, most especially Tyne and Wear, has been due to the prevalence of westerly winds during November, and these dry areas are to the lee of the Pennines. The westerly or south-westerly winds are generally moist, but most of the moisture comes out as rain over windward-facing hills – especially the Lake District and Pennines – and hence the air is relatively dry as it descends towards the east coast. Also at play to some extent is the Foehn or “Föhn” effect, where the drier air warms as it descends.”

The start of November saw a continuation of the very unsettled spell with which October had concluded, with significant rain in many areas. Things then settled down with a cold snap between 4th and 6th, bringing the first notable frosts for much of England and Wales. It soon became milder again with low-pressure systems being held to the west as pressure was higher over the Continent. Towards mid-month it became more widely unsettled again, with some heavier falls of rain in places but remaining very mild.

Rainfall

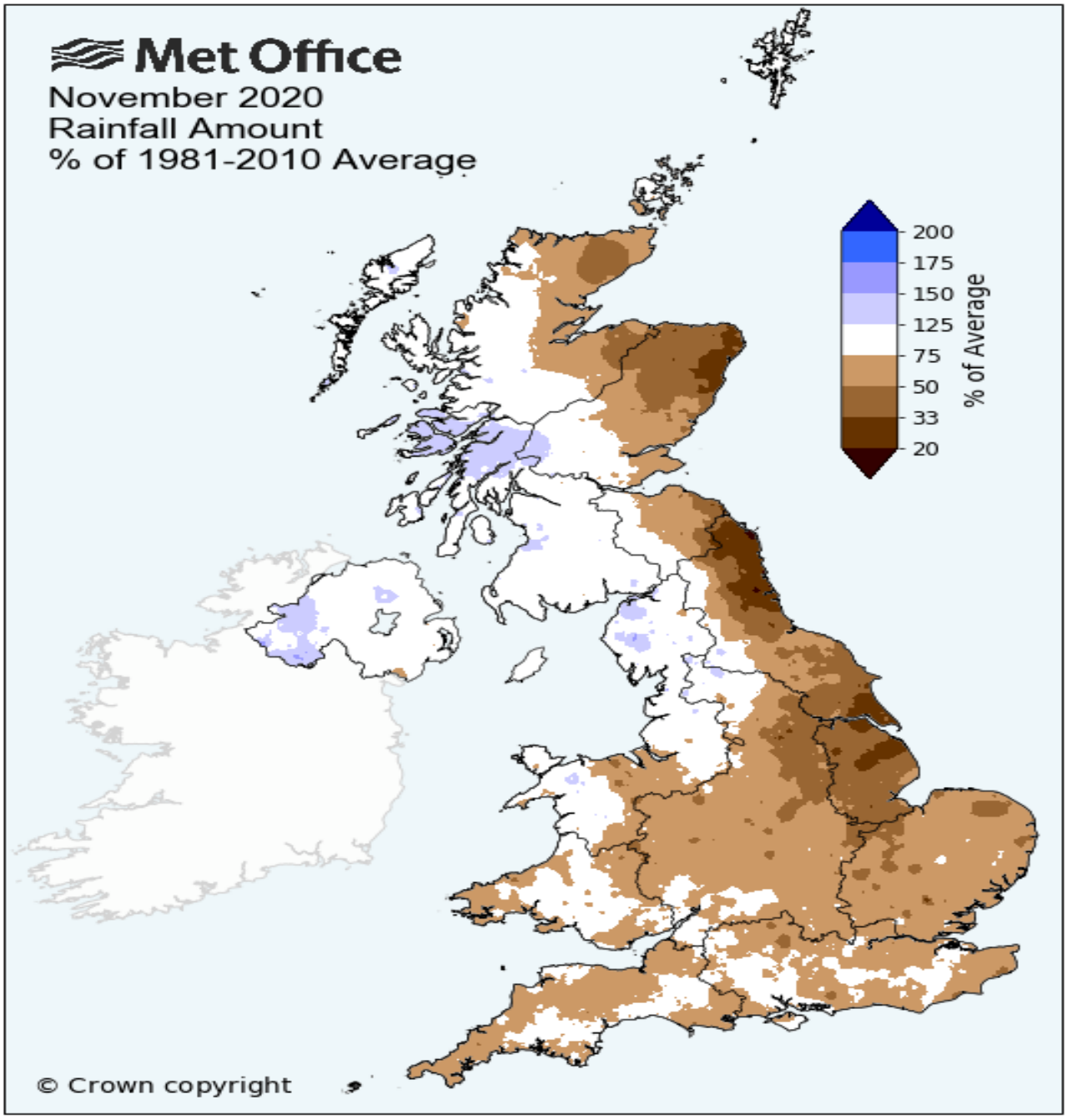
East and north-east England was the driest district, receiving only 51% (39.7mm) of its rainfall, Tyne and Wear recording the lowest in the area making it their second driest November on record. Surrounding areas in east and north-east England also received much lower than average rainfall totals, including Durham at 55% (50.2mm), Northumberland 49% (46.1mm), and Lincolnshire 39% (22.7mm).

In contrast, Northern Ireland has been the only region to exceed its average monthly rainfall with 106% (119.1mm), and County Fermanagh recording 129% (154.3mm).

Lower than average rainfall is a theme for November with many other areas across the UK also being much drier, including: Aberdeenshire 42% (47.3mm), Angus 52% (59.6mm), Banffshire 44% (49.1mm), Bedfordshire 58% (34.6mm), Berwickshire 47% (37.5mm), Caithness 49% (57.9mm), Cambridgeshire 52% (27.9mm), City of Aberdeen 29% (26.5), East Riding of Yorkshire 37% (23.2mm), Kincardineshire 44% (45.7mm), Leicestershire 56% (34.1mm), Moray 48% (39mm), Norfolk 57% (37.8mm),

Nottinghamshire 47% (26.6mm) and South Yorkshire 48% (34.7mm).

The counties with the most rainfall relative to the monthly average were: Argyll and Bute 126% (283.3mm), Ayrshire and Arran 112% (182.2mm), Cumbria 114% (176.9mm), Dunbartonshire 116% (226.3mm), Lanarkshire 111% (142.6mm), Renfrewshire 114% (193.6mm), Stirling and Falkirk 118% (239.2mm) and Western Isles 110% (190.3mm).



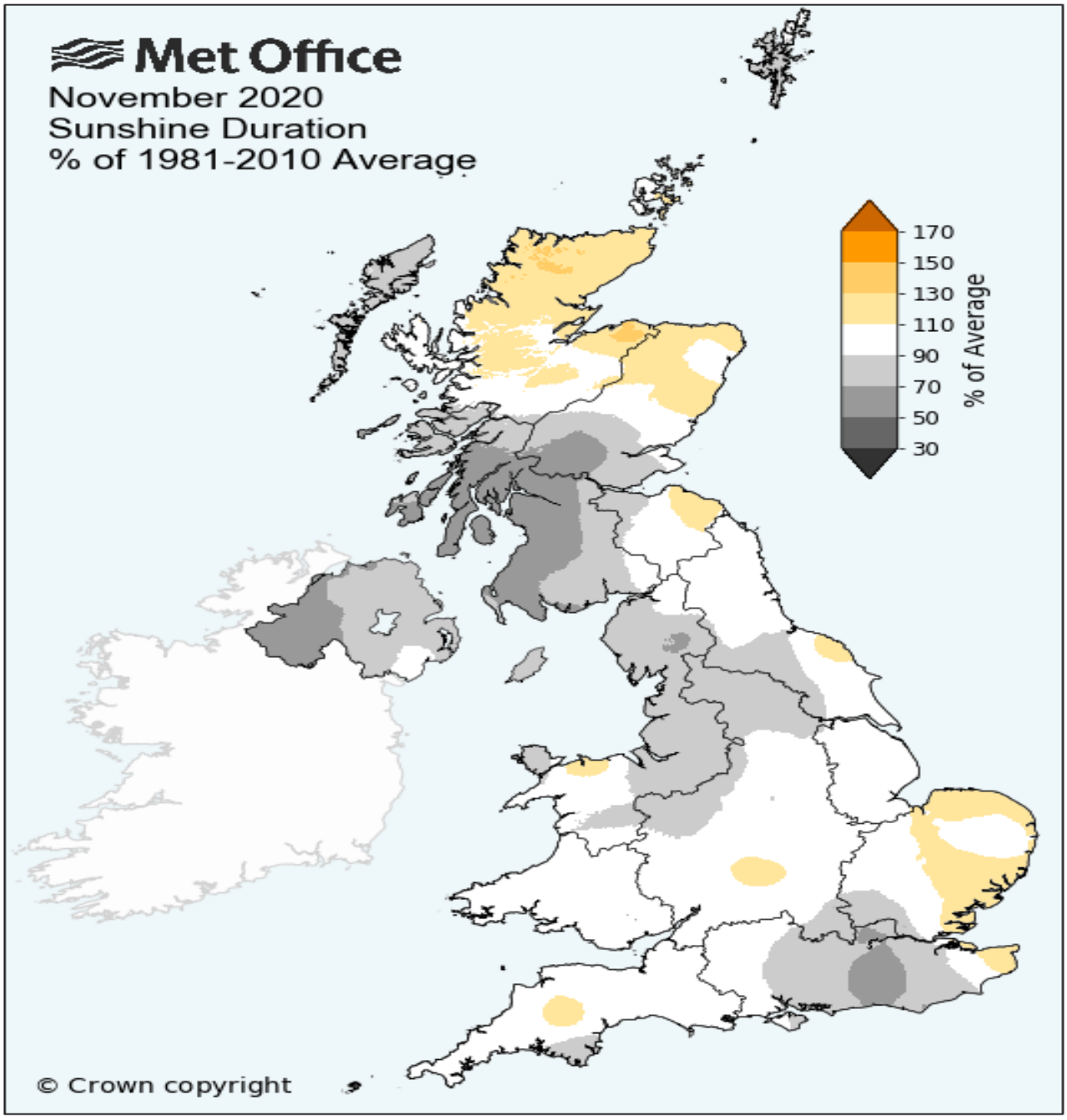
	Rainfall	
Provisional November figures	**Actual rainfall**	**% of the November average**
UK	100.9mm	84

	Rainfall	
Provisional November figures	**Actual rainfall**	**% of the November average**
England	62.2mm	71
Wales	131.9mm	81
Scotland	153.8mm	93
Northern Ireland	119.1mm	106

Sunshine

Sunshine for most this month has been below or close to the monthly average, but south-west Scotland and Northern Ireland were the dullest areas (western Scotland 69%, 34.6 hours and Northern Ireland 74%, 39.7 hours). The only districts to reach 100% of the monthly sunshine hours were northern Scotland 110% (38.1 hours) and East Anglia 107% (72.6 hours).

Individual counties that experienced a rather dull month were Ayrshire and Arran with 57% (29.8 hours) of their monthly average, City of Glasgow 56% (31.2 hours), Dunbartonshire 59% (30.6 hours), and Renfrewshire 54% (29.8 hours).



	Sunshine	
Provisional November figures	**Actual sunshine in hours**	**% of the November average**
UK	53.1	93
England	60.9	94
Wales	54.5	97
Scotland	42.1	92
Northern Ireland	39.7	74

Temperature

Temperatures for the UK were around 1.5°C above average in November, which has contributed to the autumn season finishing around half a degree warmer than average. The warmest county relative to average was East Sussex with a mean temperature anomaly of +2.1 °C above average. Tyne and Wear was not far behind with a mean temperature of +1.9°C above average for the month.

	Maximum temperature		**Minimum temperature**	
Provisional November figures	**Actual °C**	**Difference from Nov average °C**	**Actual °C**	**Difference from Nov average °C**
UK	10.7	1.5	4.8	1.5
England	11.5	1.6	5.3	1.5
Wales	11.0	1.4	5.0	1.1
Scotland	9.3	1.6	3.9	1.7
Northern Ireland	10.4	1.0	4.9	1.4

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For the latest guidance to follow during the COVID-19 pandemic please visit the UK Government's coronavirus advice page. Those living in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland can access country-specific advice.

Date Created
December 2020

Opposing forces battle for winter supremacy

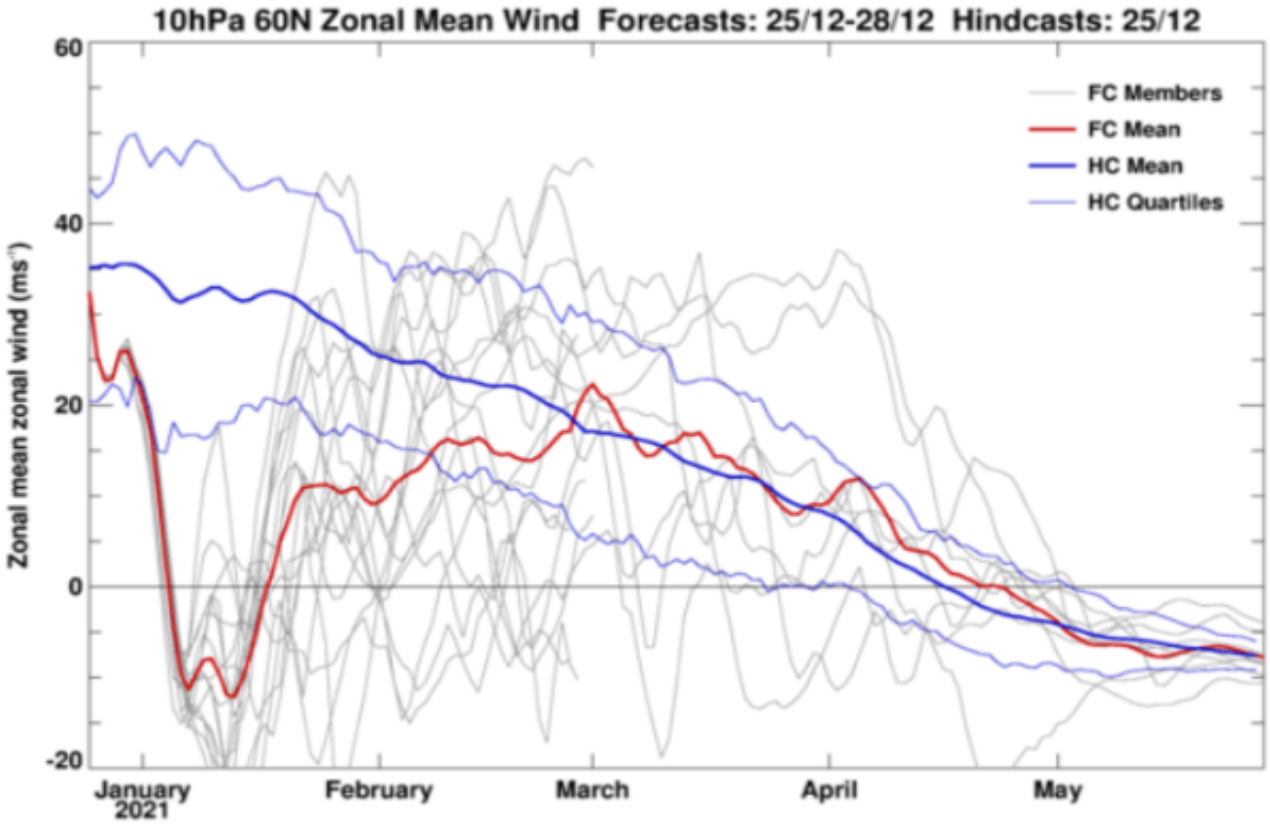
Description

The second half of December has seen dramatic swings between different weather patterns. Storm Bella brought strong winds and flooding, while the current flow of air from the north is bringing colder conditions with ice and some snow across the UK. With dramatic changes in weather over the last two weeks, what is the pattern for the first half of January?

We expect the northerly feel to continue into the new year, however, as we look further ahead there are currently conflicting meteorological signals. To gain an understanding of the longer-term outlook forecasters need to look at signals from around the globe.

Adam Scaife, Head of Met Office long-range prediction, said: “Our latest forecasts now show that a sudden stratospheric warming (SSW) is expected in the first week of January which will maintain the chances of colder weather throughout the coming month.

“During an SSW intense warming occurs high in the atmosphere at around 30km above the North Pole. This is accompanied by a complete reversal of the winds that circulate around the Arctic at high altitude and the mean wind direction switches from the usual strong winter westerlies to easterlies.



“The easterlies at high altitude then slowly burrow down towards the lower atmosphere where our

weather occurs. This process increases the chances of colder weather right across Northern Europe for several weeks after the event first occurs high the stratosphere."

Met Office Chief Meteorologist Paul Davies said: "It's important to note that not all SSWs lead to colder-than-normal conditions over the UK and there are other global weather factors that can impact our winter weather. This year they include a La Nina.

"During La Nina the second half of the winter in the UK tends to be dominated by milder and wetter conditions which come from the Atlantic on an invigorated jet stream. In effect, we have two opposing forces for winter supremacy at play; the SSW and La Nina.

In the meantime, and consistent with a SSW in early January, our current 6-30 day forecast points to the likelihood of the cold conditions experienced recently continuing through January."

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